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## Article 56: Titus at a Glance

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# TITUS AT A GLANCE

This book offers encouragement to a (possible) discouraged pastor (Titus). Paul counsels him in his dealings with both church leaders and lay people alike, reminding all involved to live godly lives in light of Jesus' soon return.

## BOTTOM LINE SUMMARY

### PAUL'S MESSAGE TO GOD'S MAN IN CRETE

The man was Titus and the message was to stay there.

*"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee"(1:5).*

## FACTS REGARDING THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK

1. Who? **Paul**. He was also known as Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:11). This relentless enemy of Christians (Acts 8:3; 22:5, 19; 26:11; Gal. 1:13) would, following his conversion (Acts 9:3-9), become the greatest missionary, church planter, soul winner, and theologian in church history, authoring nearly half of the New Testament books!
2. What? The books of Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon.
3. When and where? Written in A.D. 64 from Asia Minor.
4. Why and to whom? To overview the duties of leaders and laity in a local church. Addressed to the church in Crete.

## KEY EVENTS

1. How to designate church leaders; how to deal with church legalists
2. Advice to the people in the pews and the pastor in the pulpit
3. Final words regarding the saints of God, the Son of God, and the undershepherd of God (Titus)

## KEY INDIVIDUALS

1. **Paul**, author of Titus and at least 12 other New Testament books, church planter, evangelist, missionary, and perhaps the greatest of all the apostles
2. **Titus**, Paul's faithful Gentile associate, ministering in Crete and recipient of the Epistle to Titus

## KEY PLACES

1. **Crete**: a large island south of Greece where Paul had assigned Titus as pastor of the local church there

2. **Nicopolis:** a city where Paul proposed to spend the winter and where he invited Titus to join him

### **UNIQUE FEATURES**

1. Titus was the only Gentile individual to receive a New Testament epistle.
2. Titus, like Timothy, was one of Paul's "preacher boys."
3. The apostle held him in great respect and fondness, referring to him as:
  - Mine own son after the common faith (1:4)
  - Titus, my brother (2 Cor. 2:13)
  - My fellow worker (2 Cor. 8:23)
4. Paul had assigned Titus to strengthen a previously established church work on the Isle of Crete. This island, southeast of Greece, was about 150 miles long and 35 miles wide, thus making it the largest of the Mediterranean islands. It was an island of 100 cities, consisting of mountains, but also very fertile valleys. The highest mountain, Mount Ida, was the traditional birthplace of the Greek god Zeus. The Cretans were relatives of the Philistines. They had a notorious reputation of being "*always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons*" (Titus 1:12, NASB). This testimony came from one of their own poets and prophets.
5. This verse (1:12) marks the final of two occasions where Paul quotes from a non-biblical source (see Acts 17:28 for the other).
6. Titus thus may have had the most challenging congregation in all the Bible! Even the women in the church may have had problems with alcohol (see 2:3).
7. The origin of the church there is unknown, but may have been started by the same returning Cretans who were present at Pentecost (see Acts 2:11).
8. The epistle to Titus was written about the same time as 1 Timothy, during that period between Paul's first and second Roman imprisonments. The three pastoral epistles may be favorably compared.
  - In 1 and 2 Timothy Paul stresses doctrine.
  - In Titus he emphasizes duty.
  - The child of God is to protect the gospel in 1 Timothy.
  - He is to proclaim it in 2 Timothy.
  - He is to practice it in Titus.
9. A summary of the person and ministry of Titus would include:
  - He was a Gentile (Greek, see Gal. 2:3).
  - He was probably a convert of Paul (Titus 1:4).
  - Some believe he may have been the brother of Luke.
  - Titus first appears in the sacred account when he accompanied Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem (Gal. 2:1).
  - He is later sent by Paul to Corinth to straighten out certain disorders in the church there and to initiate an offering for the poor saints at Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:6, 10-11).
  - He then meets Paul in Macedonia and is sent back to Corinth carrying the epistle of 2 Corinthians to pave the way for Paul's coming and to complete their offering (2 Cor. 2:3, 12-13; 7:5-6, 13-14; 8:16-17, 23; 12:14, 18).

- He seems to have accompanied Paul during the third missionary trip.
  - He is last mentioned in 2 Tim. 4:10, at which time Paul sends him from southern Greece to Dalmatia (Yugoslavia).
10. This epistle marks the last of but two instances where the great theological word “regeneration” is used in the New Testament.
- It is found in Mt. 19:28 where it refers to mother nature.
  - It is found in Titus 3:5 where it refers to redeemed sinners.
11. In simple but sublime terms this epistle explains just how grace and works fit together.
- We are equal BY grace (3:5, 7)
  - We are saved FOR works (2:14; 3:8)
12. Titus contains two of the most concise summaries in the entire New Testament regarding the relationship of gospel truth to practical living
- First passage:  
*“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works”*(2:11-14).
  - Second passage:  
*“But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life”*(3:4-7).
13. In essence these verses provide for us the WHO, WHAT, WHEN, HOW, and WHY in regard to God’s eternal plan:
- The WHO (2:13; 3:6)
  - The WHAT and WHEN (2:11; 3:4)
  - The HOW (2:14a; 3:5)
  - The WHY (2:12, 14b; 3:7)
14. As already noted, the book of Titus has much to say concerning the believer’s works, mentioning the subject on six occasions:
- “every good work” (1:16; 3:1)
  - “a pattern of good works” (2:7)
  - “zealous of good works” (2:14)
  - “maintain good works” (3:8, 14)
15. Titus records the final of four instances, in the pastoral epistles where we read the little phrase, “this is a faithful saying.” These are:
- Referring to Jesus’ saving ministry (1 Tim. 1:15)
  - Regarding the promise of eternal life (1 Tim. 4:8; Titus 3:8)
  - Regarding our future reign with Christ (2 Tim. 2:11)

## **COMPARISON WITH OTHER BIBLE BOOKS**

### **1. 2 Corinthians:**

- Titus carried 2 Corinthians to the Corinthian church (2 Cor. 8:16-23); he is the recipient of this letter.

### **2. 1 Timothy:**

- Both emphasize church organization.

### **3. 1, 2 Timothy:**

- All are pastoral letters. 1, 2 Timothy are more personal; Titus is more official.

### **4. James:**

- Both emphasize good works as the visible proof of saving faith.

## **TITLES FOR AND TYPES OF JESUS**

1. Jesus Christ (1:1)
2. God our Savior (1:3)
3. The Lord Jesus Christ (1:4)
4. The grace of God (2:11)
5. The Great God (2:13)